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NATO Officers' Link To Red Spy Ring Denied

ROME (AP) — The Italian defense ministry last night denied press reports that officials of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have been implicated in the Soviet spy ring it is investigating.

In a similar communication, NATO headquarters in Paris said it had been informed that news of "the alleged involvement of 300 NATO officers in the spy ring discovered in Italy lacks any foundation."

Informants had said earlier that Giorgio Rinaldi, an Italian parachuting instructor held in Turin as the central figure in the spy network, told Italian counterintelligence agents that 300 NATO employees were involved.

Fearful for His Life

Rinaldi was reported fearful that he would be killed to prevent him from talking. He, his wife, and their chauffeur, Armando Girard, were arrested March 15 and formally charged Wednesday with gathering data on American bases in Italy and Spain and selling it to the Russians.

Rinaldi visited the Soviet Union four times from 1953 to last year and was made a colonel in the Soviet intelligence service, Italian newspapers reported.

One newspaper said the spy organization was developed over a period of seven years at a cost of \$16 million.

The government of Cyprus confirmed press reports that arrests had been made there during an espionage investigation.

U.S. Radio a Target

Police sources said two Greek Cypriots were being held on suspicion of being involved in an international Soviet spy network. They said the targets of the espionage were two British bases and other British military installations on Cyprus, as well as three State Department radio stations on the east Mediterranean island.

Communist newspapers have charged that the U.S. Central

Intelligence Agency uses the radio stations to contact agents in the Soviet Union and East Europe. American officials have said two of the stations are used solely for State Department messages and the third monitors radio stations in the Balkan mountains and the Middle East.